

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 036354

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENGR, RP, US

SUBJECT: WESTINGHOUSE NUCLEAR POWER PROJECT

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REFS: A) MANILA 861, B) MANILA 923, C) STATE 20574

1. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY UPDATE ON STATUS OF MARCOS-ORDERED "FORMAL HEARING" INTO WESTINGHOUSE CONTRACT TO DETERMINE BASIS, IF ANY, FOR PRESS ALLEGATIONS OF IMPROPRIETY (REFS. A AND B). IN PARTICULAR, WE ARE INTERESTED IN INDICATION AS TO WHEN HEARING IS LIKELY TO BE COMPLETED AND, AS WE ARE ASSUMING, COPY OF REPORT MIGHT BE OBTAINED BY EMBASSY.

2. AS NOTED IN REF. C, PARA. 5, DEPT. (OES) IS INTERESTED IN OUTCOME OF HEARING AS PART OF ITS REVIEW OF THE PHILIPPINE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT SITUATION AND AS A POSSIBLE ELEMENT IN ITS RESPONSE TO NRC STAFF REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PREPARATORY TO THE STAFF MAKING ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO NRC COMMISSIONERS CONCERNING THE ISSUANCE OF
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3. IN MEANTIME, JUSTICE, PURSUANT TO ITS INVESTIGATION OF THE WESTINGHOUSE CONTRACT, HAS INFORMALLY INDICATED A POSSIBLE INTEREST IN NEGOTIATING A "SHARING OF INFORMATION

AGREEMENT" WITH ITS GOP COUNTERPART (PRESUMABLY PHILIPPINE DEPT. OF JUSTICE). UNDER SUCH AGREEMENT, IT WOULD GIVE GOP (SELECTED) INFORMATION IN RETURN FOR GOP MAKING AVAILABLE WHATEVER IT MAY HAVE OR CAN DEVELOP ON WESTINGHOUSE CASE. THERE ARE NUMBER OF PRECEDENTS FOR THIS TYPE OF AGREEMENT (MOST RECENT AND PROMINENT BEING THAT WITH ROK IN TONGSUN PARK CASE) WHICH JUSTICE NEGOTIATES DIRECTLY AFTER CONSULTING WITH, AND RECEIVING CONCURRENCE FROM STATE.

4. EA/PHL HAS POINTED OUT TO JUSTICE THAT GOP HAS ALREADY INSTITUTED A HEARING INTO WESTINGHOUSE CONTRACT; THAT WE EXPECT EMBASSY WILL RECEIVE COPY OF HEARING REPORT, WHICH CAN BE PROVIDED TO JUSTICE; AND THAT WE VERY SERIOUSLY DOUBT GOP INTENDS OR WOULD FEEL IT NECESSARY TO GO BEYOND THIS INQUIRY. THUS, AS PRACTICAL MATTER, TIME AND EFFORT EXPENDED IN SEEKING AND NEGOTIATING FORMAL INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENT WOULD NOT BE PRODUCTIVE, SINCE EXTENT OF WHAT GOP COULD BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE CAN BE OBTAINED BY JUSTICE IN ANY EVENT. MOREOVER, WE HAVE OBSERVED THAT JUSTICE PURSUANCE OF FORMAL AGREEMENT WOULD NEEDLESSLY EXACERBATE PHILIPPINE SENSITIVITIES AND COULD WELL BE VIEWED AS UNWARRANTED USG INTRUSION INTO MATTER WHICH GOP HAD ALREADY INVESTIGATED.

5. EMBASSY COMMENTS AND VIEWS ON FOREGOING, AS WELL AS CONFIRMATION THAT GOP HEARING REPORT WILL BE MADE CONFIDENTIAL

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AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY, ARE REQUESTED

6. PLEASE NOTE FOR EA ONLY CAPTION. VANCE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** ONLY

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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